

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH 2017

PRESENT: Councillors John Bowden, Lynne Jones, Ross McWilliams, Eileen Quick and Colin Rayner (Chairman)

Also in attendance: Cllr Saunders, Cllr Rankin, Cllr Airey, Cllr Hill and Cllr E Wilson.

Officers: Russell O'Keefe, Andy Jeffs, Craig Miller, David Scott, Hilary Hall, Kevin McDaniel, Jacquie Hurd and David Cook.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received by Cllr Burbage, Cllr L Evans, Cllr Carroll, Cllr D Wilson, Cllr Gilmore, Cllr Dudley and Rob Stubbs.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

The Part I minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2017 were approved as a true and correct record.

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK QUARTER 3 2016/17

The Head of Governance, Partnerships, Performance and Policy informed the Panel that Cabinet had supported a previous request by the Panel that under performing performance indicators be scrutinised. It had been agreed that when an indicator was reported as off target (red) for two consecutive quarters then the Lead Member would be invited to attend an appropriate scrutiny panel. Improvement plans would also be placed on the RBWM website.

Cllr Carroll had given his apologies for being unable to attend the meeting and had asked the Head of Commissioning - Adults, Children and Health to attend in his place to discuss why the target regarding the number of residents who quit smoking for at least 4 weeks from the target cohort. The Panel were informed that Cllr Carroll had circulated a briefing note on the targets performance and that he had established a Task and Finish Group to review performance that would report to the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel. Councillors Carroll, Jones and Ilyas were the Members on the Task Group.

The Chairman mentioned that he was concerned that there was plenty of information regarding the dangers of smoking yet young people continued to smoke. The Chairman asked what the greatest challenge was for meeting the target. The Panel were informed that the targeted groups were the ones that found it the most difficult to stop smoking. In response to questions the Panel were also informed that examples of good practice were being looked at and better use of other resources such as social workers to help reinforce the message.

Referring to the improvement plan Cllr McWilliams asked how effective had a targeted approach been via the PSHE network. The Panel were informed that training courses had been run however schools did not keep data on how effective an impact this had. The Task and Finish Group would be looking at how the impact might be measured.

(Cllr E Wilson joined the meeting)

Cllr Bowden mentioned that hospitals were smoke free but staff smoked outside and the Chairman asked if we also worked with private school. It was noted that we did work with the NHS and private schools.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Commissioning - Adults, Children and Health for attending the meeting.

(Hilary Hall left the meeting)

Cllr Hill and the Head of Library and Resident Services attended the meeting to answer any question on the % of complaints upheld indicator. Cllr Hill informed the Panel that he wished to review the target as he did not believe it was fit for purpose and a better target would be to see complaints being reduced as service delivery improved.

The Head of Library and Resident Services informed the Panel that in 2015 the complaint functions for both the statutory Adults and Children and corporate complaints were brought together into one team to provide resilience and consistence across all directorates. The formal Corporate Complaints policy was revised and published in October 2016 detailing specifically what a complaint was and reducing the stages from three to two before residents can escalate to the Local Government Ombudsman. It was also reviewed what constituted a complaint, for example someone disagreeing with a planning decision was not a complaint.

In 2016 the online complaints system was launched and residents for the first time were able to log and track their complaint online and various templates are now used to ensure that all complaint elements are individually captured and responded to and a decision made as to whether it was upheld.

The Panel were informed that the next step would be to undertake analysis of performance against target by service area with action plans agreed with Head of Service.

The Chairman mentioned that he had visited other authorities websites and that on a lot of the sites it was not clear how to make a complaint.

Cllr Jones asked if a resident had to go through the formal complaints procedure. The Panel were informed that the online complaints forms were sent to the complaints team who worked with service areas to asses if they are complaints or if another avenue of action was required.

It was agreed that Cllr Hill and Cllr McWilliams would meet to discuss the value of the performance indicator and if it should be modified or a different indicator being introduced.

Cllr E Wilson mentioned that it might be more interesting in reviewing those complaints that were upheld by the ombudsman.

(Cllr Hill left the meeting and Cllr Saunders joined the meeting)

Cllr N Airey and the Head of Schools and Education Services attended the meeting to discuss two performance indicators that had been reporting off target for two consecutive quarters; Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training and % of Children in Care with personal education plans (PEP).

With regards to the percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training indicator the Panel were informed that the measure represents a small cohort with a proportion who were unable to access EET due to long term health / disability or parenthood. There was a vacant Personal Advisor post that was being recruited to and work was being undertaken to encourage the uptake of those becoming apprentices. Cllr Airey reiterated that it was a small cohort and that the target needed to differentiate those who were EET and those that could not undertake work, education or training.

With regards to the % of Children in Care with personal education plans (PEP) out of the 86 on role all but 1 had a plan and it was important that when the service was transferred to AFC that there was no slippage. The Chairman asked if the numbers were expected to increase or decrease in September 2017 and was informed that the number had been stable over the last few years but there was a level of turbulence as children changed schools. Cllr Airey reported that it was important for all Members to remember that they are corporate parents and we need to support our children in care so their background was not detrimental to their future.

The Strategic Director of Corporate and Community Services informed that the percentage of planning appeals lost had been wrongly reported in the performance report and that the target was just short and not off target. The Panel were informed that the Borough Local Plan was due to go before Council in April 2017 and if approved it would go for examination before being brought back to Council later in the year. Until the Borough Local plan was approved the Council could expect to continue to lose planning appeals and there had been a high profile appeals were significant costs were awarded.

The Chairman mentioned that Members going against officer recommendations at Panel should have material reasons and that they should be prepared to support officers at appeal hearings.

The updates were noted.

COUNCIL MANIFESTO TRACKER

The Head of Governance, Partnerships, Performance and Policy informed the Panel that a revised version of the report had been published on the Cabinet agenda that had the 'Principle or Deliverable' and 'Expected Completion Date' columns completed.

The Panel were informed that there had also been a slight improvement in performance with 20% of the commitments having been met with only two targets reporting as not being met.

The Chairman asked if there were any targets that had not been met that would put our residents at risk and it was reported that there were not.

Cllr Jones raised concern that there were a number of targets that were reporting Green but she felt that with only 18 months left could not be met, the example given was 03.04 - Enhance and support our conservation areas. The Panel were informed that for this indicator the target was to do review 2 conservation areas per year and not all conservation areas.

Cllr McWilliams mentioned that 02.10 Plan for the arrival of Crossrail to deliver more integrated rail, taxi and bus services indicator was reporting Amber but the commentary said that sections could not be completed. The Panel were informed that the discussion about the station opportunity area was dependent on the appointment of the JV partner and that the business case did not need to be submitted to the LEP until July.

Cllr Rankin reported that a more mature approach to the delivery of the commitments had been undertaken and if a commitment did not offer value for money and benefits to the community then it would not be undertaken just to meet the manifesto commitments.

Cllr Jones asked if records were kept of the number of volunteers who no longer volunteered regarding commitment number 06.05 Encourage more people to volunteer in their community. The Panel were informed that it was possible to track those volunteers who could no longer continue but later came back to volunteering.

Cllr E Wilson attended the meeting to discuss indicator 08.04 Increase the number of litter and dog bins and empty them regularly. Cllr Wilson distributed pictures of BigBelly solar operated bins that have a compacting mechanism and when full sends a message to operators to

empty. The Panel were informed that they had been successful in high footfall areas and felt that RBWM should test them in Windsor high street.

The Chairman recommended that the company should be asked to install one for a 12 month trial before any were purchased.

In response to question Cllr Wilson confirmed that recycling versions were available and that with regards to security issues they were fixed to the ground by metal rods and that they could be removed when required.

Russel O'Keefe mentioned that he would mention the proposal when meeting with Windsor Councillors.

Resolved unanimously: The Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. Subject to the comments below:

- **The Panel were reassured that there were no targets not being met that put our residents at risk.**
- **Additional information was requested on the status of 03.04 – enhance and support conservation areas.**
- **Approved the more mature approach to manifesto commitments in that it was recognised that commitments would only be met if they were cost effective and were beneficial to our residents.**
- **0605 - Encourage more people to volunteer in their community. The Panel asked for clarification on how we monitor the people who have to stop being volunteers.**
- **0804 - Increase the number of litter and dog bins, and empty them regularly. Cllr E Wilson attended the meeting to raise the potential use of Big Belly Bins. Members were informed that the potential use of them could be raised at the senior leadership team meeting with Windsor Members. The chairman recommended that if the bins were to be introduced the company should first do a 12 month trial with one bins first.**

The Chairman thanked Cllr Airey, Cllr Rankin and Cllr E Wilson for attending the meeting and contributing to the discussion on the item.

(Cllr N Airey, Cllr E Wilson and Kevin McDaniel left the meeting)

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Cllr Saunders introduced the latest Financial update report due to be presented to Cabinet. He explained that it included a proposal to increase fostering care allowances and a proposed loan for the Craufurd Arms Society Ltd.

The Panel were informed that there was an underspend of £0.5m, with all Directorates contributing. This would leave reserves at £6.4m, well above the budget target figure of £5.3m. The Adults, Children and Health directorate were predicting an underspend of £31,000 on a budget of £57.5m. The Lead Member commented that this should be applauded given that a single individual case with high care needs could cost up to £100,000. The Corporate and Community Services directorate predicted an underspend of £64,000 against a budget of £4.3m, despite significant planning pressures. The Operations and Customer Services directorate predicted an underspend of £428,000 against a budget of £2.6m.

Capital slippage amounted to £13m not due to delays but the fact that funding was often applied for in one year with expenditure anticipated over a number of years. The Panel also noted the cash flow projection showing debt was set to rise to fund the priority tactical investment programme in the range of £73m for regeneration, school expansion and the plans

for York House. This new approach had previously been considered by this Panel and the Audit and Performance Review Panel.

Cllr McWilliams questioned why there was a £2.9 million slippage in school expansion and was informed that some of the projects had costed less than expected and that the surplus funds had been re-allocated.

Resolved unanimously: that the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. The Chairman thanked the Lead Member, Cllr Saunders, for presenting the report. The Panel were pleased the budgets were back on target.

(David Scott left the meeting)

PROPOSAL FOR A SHARED EMERGENCY PLANNING SERVICE FOR BERKSHIRE

The Panel considered the Cabinet report that proposed the establishment of a shared Emergency Planning service for Berkshire.

The Panel were informed that the current Berkshire Emergency Planning model was introduced in 1998 and was based on each unitary authority employing dedicated resource with informal joint working arrangements across a range of shared activities.

A recent review had highlighted a number of issues with existing arrangements, for example a lack of resilience in each authority. Berkshire Leaders had thus decided to investigate shared pan Berkshire service.

The review concluded that the Emergency Planning services had demonstrated a high level of professionalism and some joint working. However, the operating framework established in 1998 was no longer effective or sustainable.

A team of five FTE was proposed. This would comprise two teams of two FTE with each team covering one of two regions, Berkshire West and Berkshire East. An Emergency Planning Team Manager would be based in the Lead Authority with the two operational teams working across the six authorities. The Lead Authority would be West Berkshire with the proposal of the South East Team being based at RBWM.

Cllr Jones mentioned that there were 6 authorities but only 5 officers so it looked as if there was a reduction in staffing levels. The Panel were informed that resources had been allocated against need and that in an emergency there were a larger cohort of officers and agencies that were called upon.

Cllr Saunders informed that there was a concern amongst some parish councillors that there would be a loss of resources in this important area so the borough had to be mindful how they presented the changes and informed about the increased resilience. It was important that local relationships were maintained.

Resolved unanimously: That the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet report and unanimously endorsed the recommendations. The Panel were pleased to note that Cabinet were requesting that the Berkshire East team would be based in the borough. The Panel felt that it was important that the knowledge base of the Emergency officer should not be lost.

COMPLAINTS PROCESS AFTER 3 APRIL 2017

Resolved unanimously: that the order of business be amended.

The Panel approved to consider the Complaints Process after 3 April 2017 report next. The report was presented by the Head of Library and Resident Services and explained the process of the complaints management and monitoring after the 3 April 2017 for partnership working with Optalis, Achieving for Children and Volker.

The Panel were informed that under the performance management agenda item the new complaints arrangements had been discussed. This paper provided flow charts for the complaints procedures for Adults, Children's and Corporate complaints. Complaints would continue to come to the Council rather than the teams delivering services.

Cllr Jones asked if negative comments and not just complaints would be passed to the Council when our partners receive them. The Panel were informed that residents did not have to make formal complaints to show something was not working and their concerns could still come via RBWM and transferred staff would still work to the same standards.

Cllr Rankin mentioned that Councillors often receive complaints and asked if these would be passed to the complaints team. The Panel were informed that they should because if they were not they could not be tracked. It was also important to distinguish what are complaints made to Members and what are resident contacts as part of the Members community advocacy role.

Cllr Quick mentioned that Members often got complaints regarding housing associations. The Panel were informed that housing associations were independent bodies and should have their own complaints procedure, however if there were multiple complaints then the Council could intervene.

The Panel noted the update.

(Jacquie Hurd left the meeting)

COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND

Cllr Rankin introduced the Cabinet Regeneration Sub-Committee report that detailed the proposed use of the Community Housing Fund (CHF) allocation of £103,375 awarded by Government. The funding came from a new government fund of £60m to help local authorities tackle the problems of second homes in their area.

The council proposed to use the funding to investigate the idea of a Community Land Trust (CLT) in the borough. A CLT was a non profit corporation owned by its members, similar to a co-operative, set up to steward the community assets on behalf of its members.

The funding would be used to commission consultants to undertake a feasibility study for a CLT on a borough regeneration site. The initial spend of £30,000 would cover an options appraisal, business plan and financial modelling. It would be important for the council to understand how a CLT would affect revenue streams.

Cllr McWilliams informed that a CLT could provide affordable housing for more than one generation and was a different option for affordable housing provision.

Resolved unanimously: that the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee report and fully endorsed the recommendations. The Panel thanked the Lead Member for presenting the report.

LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP GROWTH DEAL UPDATE

Cllr Rankin introduced the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee report that considered the funding recently allocated to the council from the third Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Deal and the requirements. The report confirmed that the council had been allocated

just over £3m subject to the completion of a satisfactory business case. The original bid for funding had focussed on the Maidenhead Missing Links strategy to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the town centre and areas to the north of the A4. The recommendation was to develop the necessary business cases and prepare plans for implementation in liaison with the appointed Joint Venture development partner.

It was proposed to produce better facilities around the opportunities and the wider implications from the regeneration project allowing better access to the town centre and transport hubs. It was aimed to enhance the public realm.

Cllr Jones asked if the 20% matched funding had been included in the MTFP and it was confirmed that it was in the cash flow. Cllr Saunders informed that there would be an addition to future capital budgets.

Resolved unanimously: that the Corporate Services O&S Panel considered the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee report and fully endorsed the recommendations. The Panel thanked the Lead Member for presenting the report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting, which began at 7.30 pm, finished at 10.40 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....